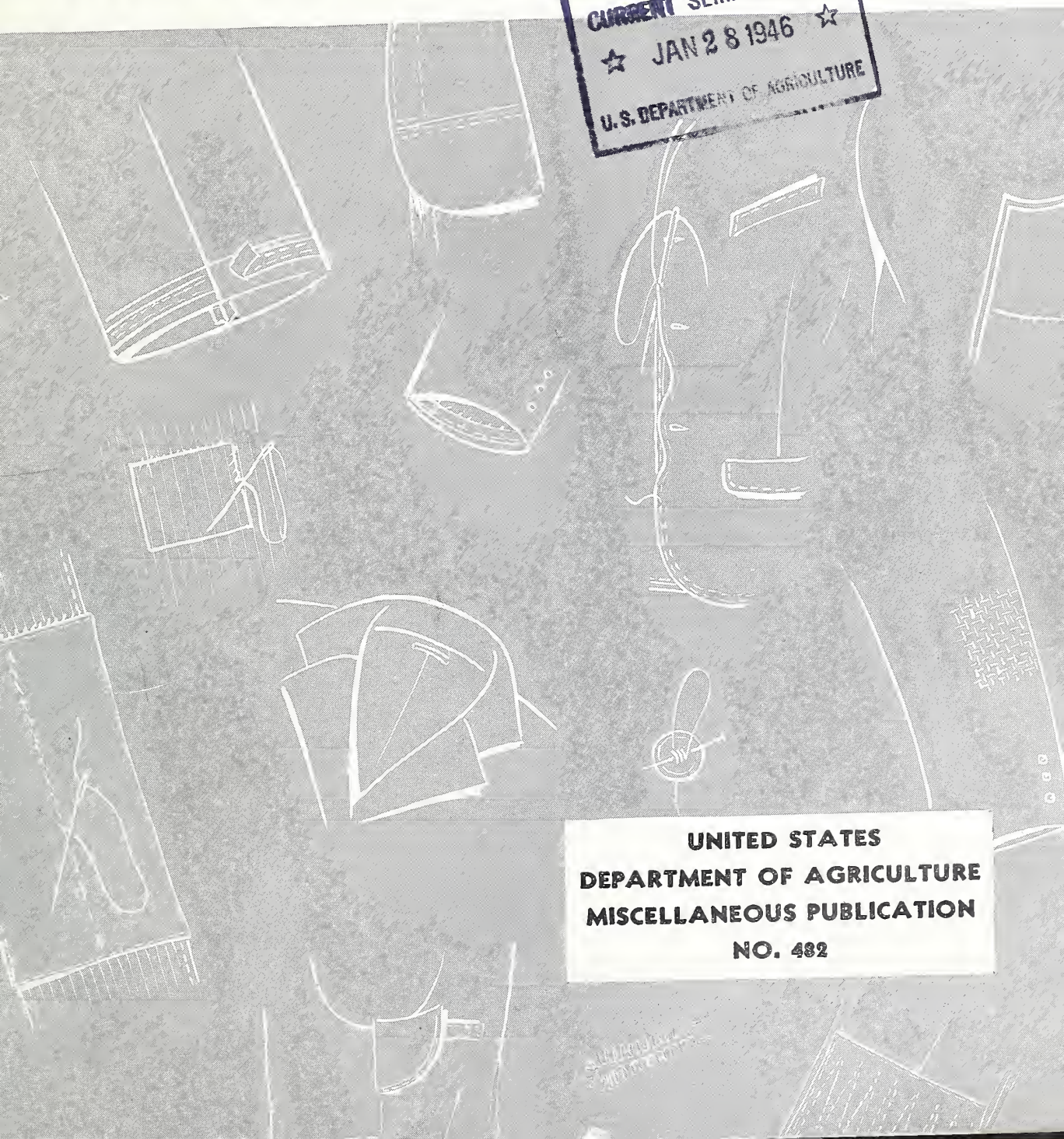
Historic, archived document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

Mending MEN'S SUITS

LIBRARY
CURRENT SERIAL RECORD
☆ JAN 28 1946 ☆
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
MISCELLANEOUS PUBLICATION
NO. 482

MENDING MEN'S SUITS

by

CLARICE L. SCOTT, associate home economics specialist

ANNE F. HAGOOD, assistant scientific aide

Bureau of Human Nutrition and Home Economics, Agricultural Research Administration

---

If she has a knack with her needle, the home sewer can confidently undertake a good many of the simpler repairs and alterations in a man's suit or overcoat. Success, however, does call for learning and using some of the tried and tested methods of professional tailors.

A number of these tailoring techniques, adapted to home use, are pictured and described in this publication. The home sewer can, for example—

Patch or darn a worn spot at elbow or trouser knee so it will not be noticeable.

Fix frayed edges of sleeves and trouser cuffs.

Patch a vest badly worn at underarm.

Replace worn-out sleeve linings, inside pockets, and trouser seat.

Restore, by machine stitching, pin stripes that have rubbed off.

Repair worn buttonholes . . . small holes . . . three-corner tears.

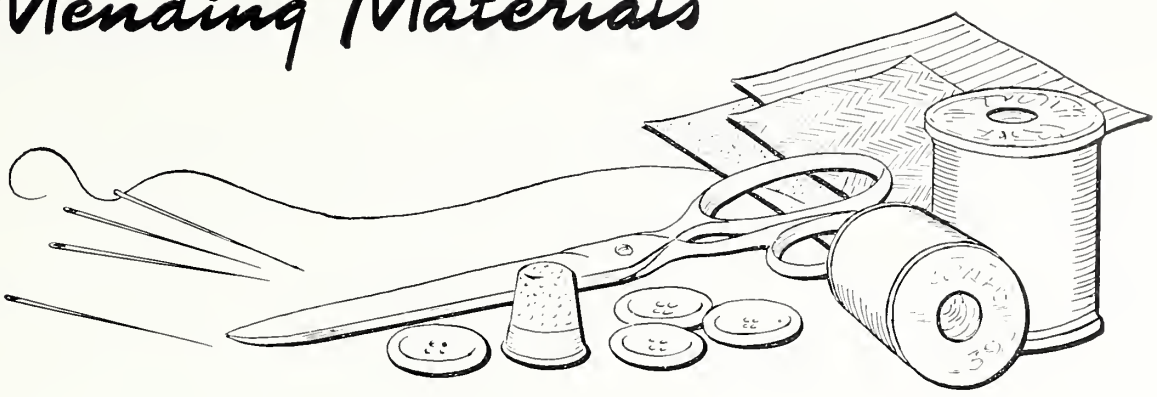
Adjust trousers for good fit, comfort, and better wear when a man gains or loses weight or when a boy keeps growing.

In addition to mending and altering, much suit saving can be done by guarding against wear—as shown in the directions for putting wear guards in trouser legs, retreads in trouser knees and seats, and underarm shields in coats. And the day of mending can be further postponed by giving a suit good care in everyday use—for which suggestions are offered.

Washington, D. C.

Issued January 1943
Slightly revised January 1946

Mending Materials



BEFORE YOU rip . . . cut . . . stitch, make sure you have on hand mending supplies that will make your work easier and your results better looking. Try to find thread, lining cloth, buttons, and other materials that match as nearly as possible those in suits on hand.

THREAD. Buy three-cord mercerized thread, size 0, for stitching. This is stronger than thread ordinarily used for home sewing. Buy darker rather than lighter colors if you can't get an exact match. Usually, black thread looks better than blue on a navy suit because blue thread works up much lighter than it appears on the spool.

Best thread for stitching buttonholes is buttonhole twist made especially for men's suits. It is heavier than that sold at notion counters for women's clothes and lighter than the kind for overcoats. This twist is sold by the yard, eight strands braided together. Three-fourths of a yard will make eight average buttonholes.

BEESWAX. A piece of beeswax is helpful in waxing thread for sewing on buttons and reworking worn buttonholes, and for waxing the cord over which buttonholes are worked.

BUTTONS. Keep buttons from worn-out suits to replace those lost or broken. If you haven't done this, buy matching pants buttons at notion counters. They are not expensive.

LINING. Get rayon lining materials that will not melt when you press them. If there is no label, ask your dealer what kind of material it is. Preshrink lining material before you cut it—otherwise it may shrink when cleaned so that seams pull out. When you buy dark linings, ask for those that will not rub off on white shirts.

POCKETING. If possible, get cotton twill made especially for inside trouser pockets. This is a sturdy material that outlasts muslin. It comes in 30-inch widths, so that two side pockets can be cut from one length. The amount needed to make two side pockets is about 16 inches. Pocket lengths vary, so measure before you buy. Remember to allow some extra for seams.

GUARDS. Best wear guards for trouser cuffs are made from wool cloth, the same as the suit. But if you have no extra pieces of suiting, use heavy cotton tape about five-eighths inch wide or sturdy matching cotton turned under on each side.

PRESSING SUPPLIES. You need to steam-press wool as you make most repairs if you want the finished work to look well. So have on hand a sponge and press cloths—one of cheesecloth for quick pressing, one of firm cotton for the final pressing.

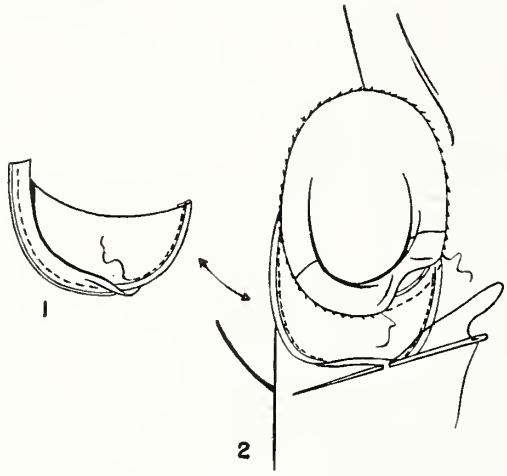
When you press, dampen the place to be pressed with warm water. Lay the press cloth over it. Set the iron down squarely on the press cloth . . . lift the iron . . . set it down again. Never press moisture completely out of wool or it will look hard and lifeless.

SCRAPS. Save scraps of matching suit material for future repairs. If your suits are custom-made, get a few scraps left over from fitting. On ready-made suits, save the pieces cut off in making alterations.

Guard Against Wear

MAKE A SUIT wear longer. postpone more diffieult repairs with shields. wear guards. and retreads. Sew these into a suit when it is new. There is no need to wait until it shows wear.

SHIELDS



Wear and perspiration ean soon eause holes under the arms in a suit lining . . . ean stain and mat the outer material of the coat. Guard against this with shields that tack in.

Make underarm shields of fabrie that matches or is similar to the suiting in the coat. Or, if you cannot get similar material, make shields of rayon lining.

Cut two pieees of wool eloth the shape of shields—one to be sewed in under eaeh armhole.

1. Bind all around with rayon. Rip the lining apart from the armhole just far enough to taek the shield in plaee.

2. Slip-stiteh shield to the eoat lining around the outer edge. Sew the lining back in around the armhole.

WEAR GUARDS

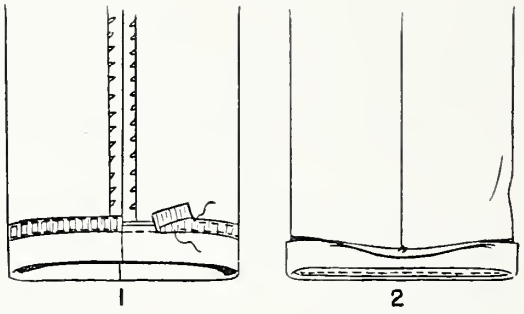
Wear guards proteet trouser legs from the rub of shoes. To make them, use heavy tape about five-eighths inch wide, or eloth eut from the leg seams.

To put a wear guard on trousers with euffs. first turn down the cuff.

1. Baste the guard on just inside the leg next to the fold that will be the bottom edge of the trouser. Stiteh by machine along both edges of the guard.

2. Turn the euff baek and taek it in plaee.

To put a wear guard on trousers without cuffs. first rip open the hem. Baste, then stiteh, a guard on just inside the lower edge of the leg—on the hem side of the bottom erease. Then rehem the trousers.

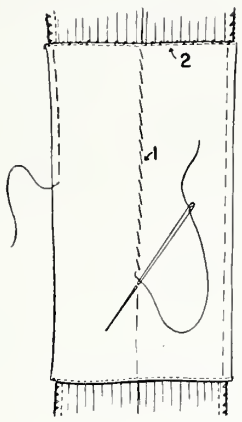


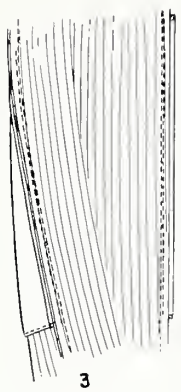
KNEE RETREADS

These are rayon pieees set in from seam to seam aeross the front where trouser legs get the most wear and where they are often damaged by perspiration. Retreads on the knees also help to hold in a press.

Cut two reetangular pieees of rayon lining material as wide as the front of the trouser leg near the croteh, and as long as it is from the level of shorts to 3 or 4 inehes below the knee. Turn under and stiteh the top and bottom edges of each retread.

Pin and baste the retread along the outside trouser seam so it will extend below the knee 3 or 4 inehes. Then pin and baste the top edge of the retread to the trousers. Baste it along the front trouser erease.





1. Tack along one side of the trouser crease with tailor's basting. Smooth the retread over to the inseam, pin, and baste to the seam line. Trim off excess material.

2. Slip-stitch the retread loosely to the trousers along the top edge so that it will not hinder dressing. Be sure the stitches do not show from the right side. Leave the lower edge loose.

3. Stitch exactly on the original seam lines. This must be done by turning the legs over and stitching from the back of the seams, because the retread covers the stitching at the front.

SEAT RETREADS

Retread the seat to protect against wear, perspiration, and scratchy material—and to make it easier to keep a press in the suit.

1. Mark notches for matching, then rip the back rise of the trousers from about 6 inches below the top down through the crotch.

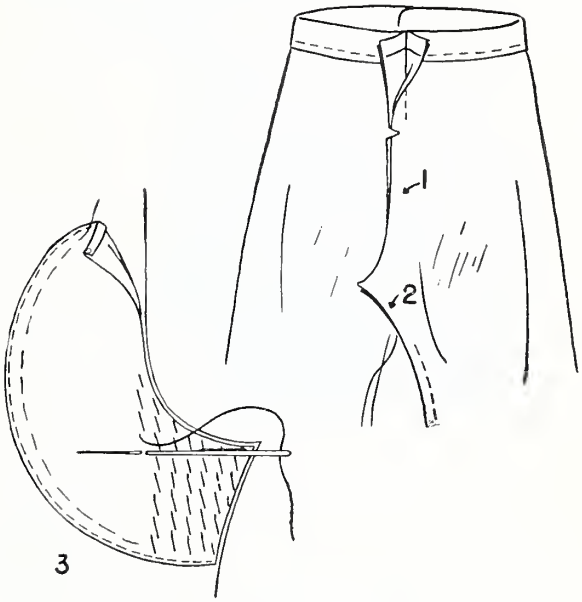
2. Rip the inseams down 3 or 4 inches from the crotch. Press the seam creases out flat.

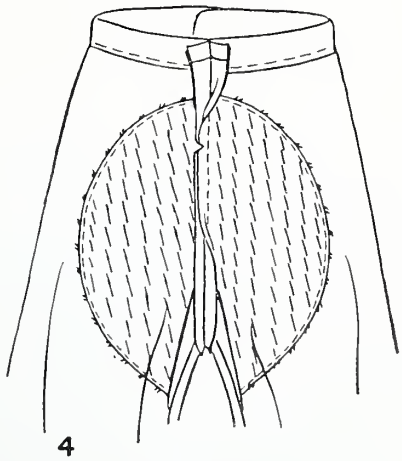
Cut a paper pattern for the retread. Fit and shape it carefully. From this pattern, cut two pieces from preshrunk rayon lining, one for each side of the seat. Turn under and baste the outside curved edges of these two pieces. Stitch by machine close to the edge and press. Pin each half retread in place with the seams carefully matched. Baste loosely.

3. Start at the crotch point and tack each retread smoothly in place with tailor's basting. Make the basting stitches about one-half inch apart and the rows of basting about one-half inch apart—a little closer where the cloth is thin. The basting should follow the lengthwise grain of the cloth so no stitches show on the right side.

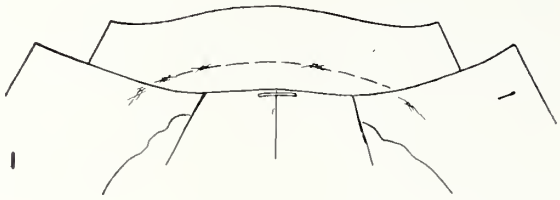
4. Slip-stitch the outer edge of the retreads to the seat of the trousers. Be sure no stitches show on the right side.

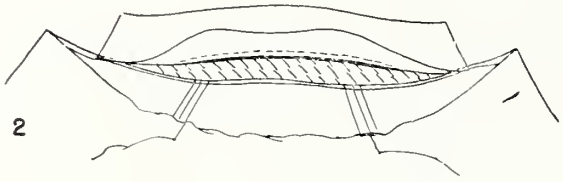
Restitch the inseams, then stitch the back rise twice for strength. Steam-press.

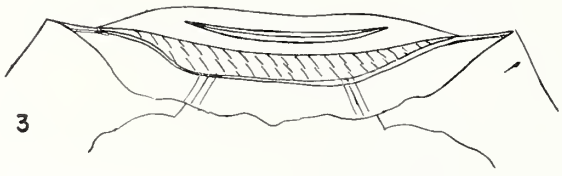


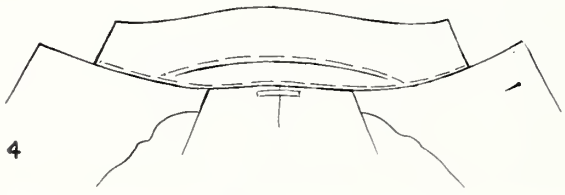


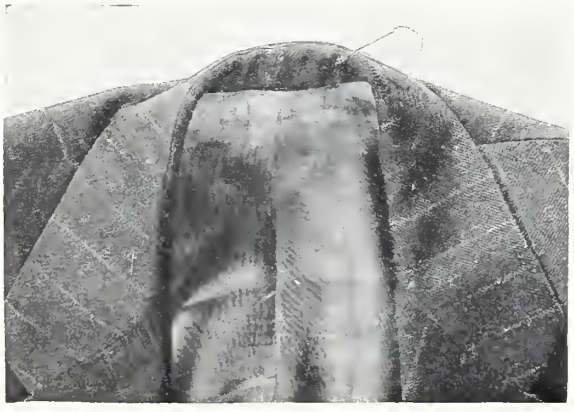
Coat Repairs


1


2


3


4



WORN COLLAR ROLL

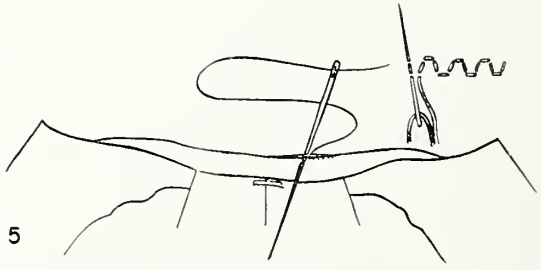
1. Run a white basting thread along the right side exactly on the line of wear. Rip collar and lining apart around the neck.

2. Inside the collar, pinch the line of wear up into a fold with the white basting line on the folded edge. Baste with small stitches. Machine-stitch no more than one-eighth inch from the folded edge. Clip through the fold with sharp, pointed scissors. The fold is cut after stitching, rather than before, to hold the shape of the collar. It also does away with the problem of matching the pattern of the cloth along the seam line.

3. Press the new seam open. Shape the top collar back in place over the under collar.

4. Hold loosely so the collar will not curl along the outer edge, and baste on the roll line to keep top collar in place. Smooth, pin, and stitch the lining back in place around the neck.

5. To make the seam line along the collar roll show less, pinch it between the thumb and forefinger, and stitch back and forth over it in a V direction. Be careful to pick up only one yarn on each side of the seam line. Pull the thread up close. This is known as the rantering stitch. Press, and the seam will hardly show.


5

FRAYED SLEEVE EDGE

Rip the sleeve lining from the coat at the cuff. Cut off sleeve buttons that are in the way. Take out the cotton fabric stay inside. Turn down the sleeve hem. Brush and scrape out all lint and soil.

1. Cut through the crease exactly on the line of wear. Trim off the worn parts of both the sleeve and the inside facing. Keep a straight even line as you cut.

2. Pin and baste the facing back to the sleeve, right sides together. Match seam and press lines. Take a very tiny seam, no more than one-eighth inch deep. Press this seam open.

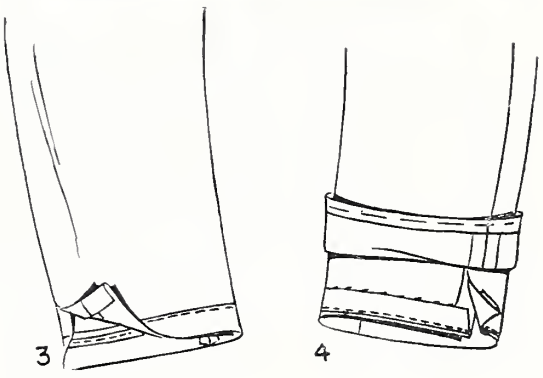
3. With the facing turned down, stitch it by machine very close to the seam line. This line of stitching keeps the seam flat so that it won't roll to the outside.

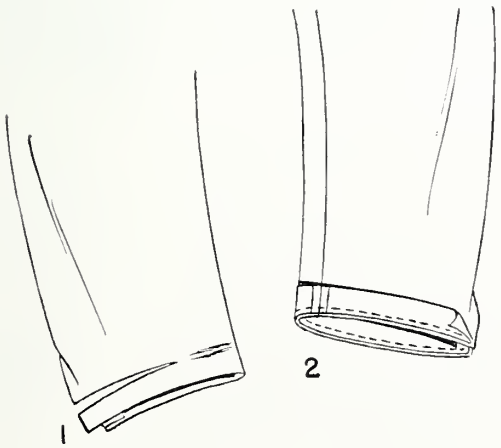
4. Turn the facing up inside the sleeve and baste it so that the seam line and machine stitching are just inside the sleeve.

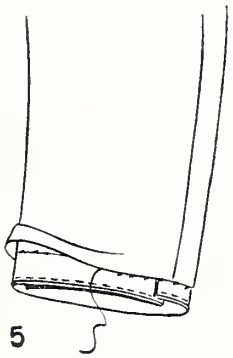
Fold and finish the vent corners as they were before the sleeve was ripped open. Be careful to turn in all raw edges so that none will show.

With a loose stitch, tack the facing to the sleeve.

5. Sew the lining back in place. Press, and sew the buttons back on.





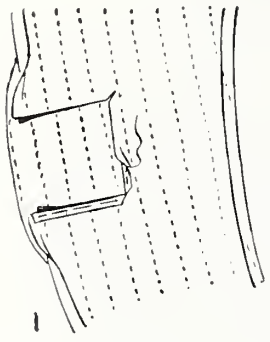


WORN ELBOWS

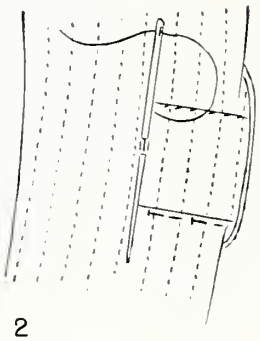
Rip the lining apart from the sleeve at the cuff and pull it up into the sleeve where it will be out of the way of your work.

To Repair a Hole

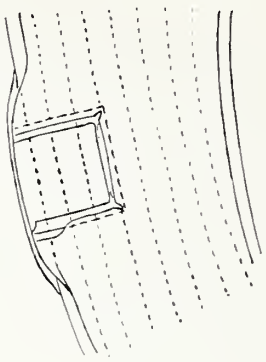
Set in a block of matching material. If you have no extra matching material on hand. enough can be cut from the inside facing of a vest or coat. Replace that material with another of similar color and weave.



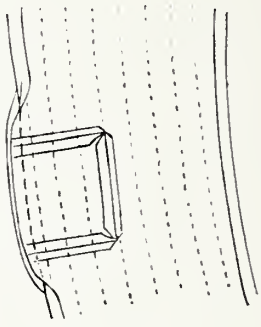
1



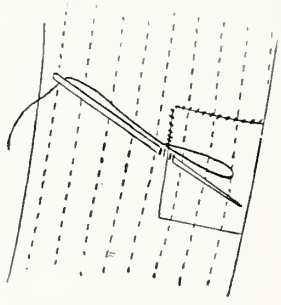
2



3



4



5

1. Cut with the grain of the goods around the hole. If it is next to a sleeve seam. rip the seam open and let one side of the finished block go into the seam. Press the piece you cut out and use it as a pattern for cutting and matching the new piece to be set in. Cut the patch piece about one-half inch larger all around than the pattern so as to have one-fourth inch for seams. Clip each corner of the hole diagonally. Turn the edges under one-fourth inch. Baste and press lightly.

2. Lay the patch on the inside of the sleeve under the hole with the pattern matched exactly. Pin in place. With contrasting thread hem the folded edge around the hole to the patch. Take stitches about three-eighths inch apart through the edge of the fold. These stitches are to serve as a guide line for seaming by machine from the wrong side.

3. Now turn to the inside of the sleeve and stitch the patch in by machine on the line of the contrasting thread. The seams on all sides of the patch have to be the exact width allowed. or the patch will not lie flat.

4. Steam-press the seams open and mitre or clip out the bulky corners.

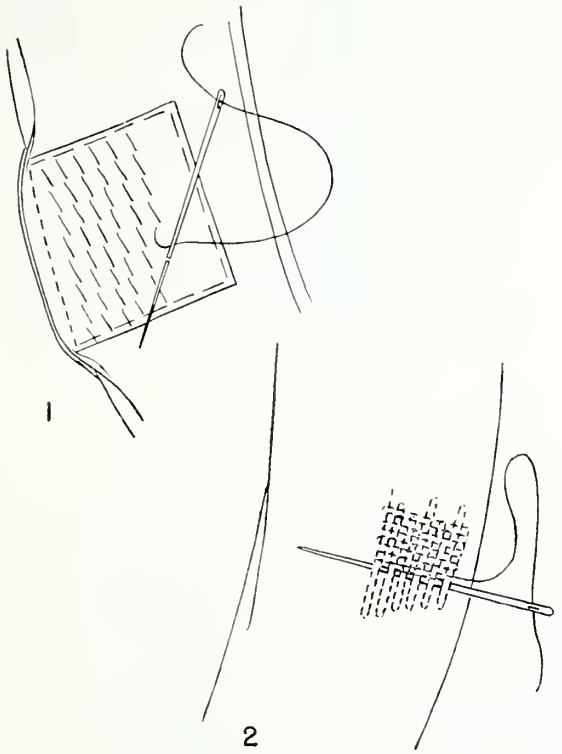
5. On the right side hide the seam line with the rantering stitch used to finish the repaired collar roll (p. 6). This strengthens and hides the seam line.

To Mend a Thin Elbow

Cut a piece of cloth or rayon lining large enough to cover the underside of the entire thin spot. Baste in place.

1. Tack with rows of loose tailor's basting. Make the rows of basting parallel to the lengthwise grain of the cloth. about one-half inch apart—closer where the cloth is very thin.

2. From the right side, darn with sewing thread that matches or is slightly darker than the material. Darn in line with the yarns in the cloth both lengthwise and crosswise and let each stitch catch through to the piece of cloth underneath.



TO RELINE SLEEVES

Rip the sleeve lining apart from the coat at the armhole and the cuff. Pull out the loose threads that tack the seams of the lining and the coat together. A sleeve has two seams, because most men's coat sleeves are made from two pieces. Rip open the seams of one sleeve lining—the least worn—or cut exactly on the stitching lines. Press each of the two pieces so that they may be used as patterns in cutting the new linings. Shrink and press the new lining material unless it is known to be preshrunk.

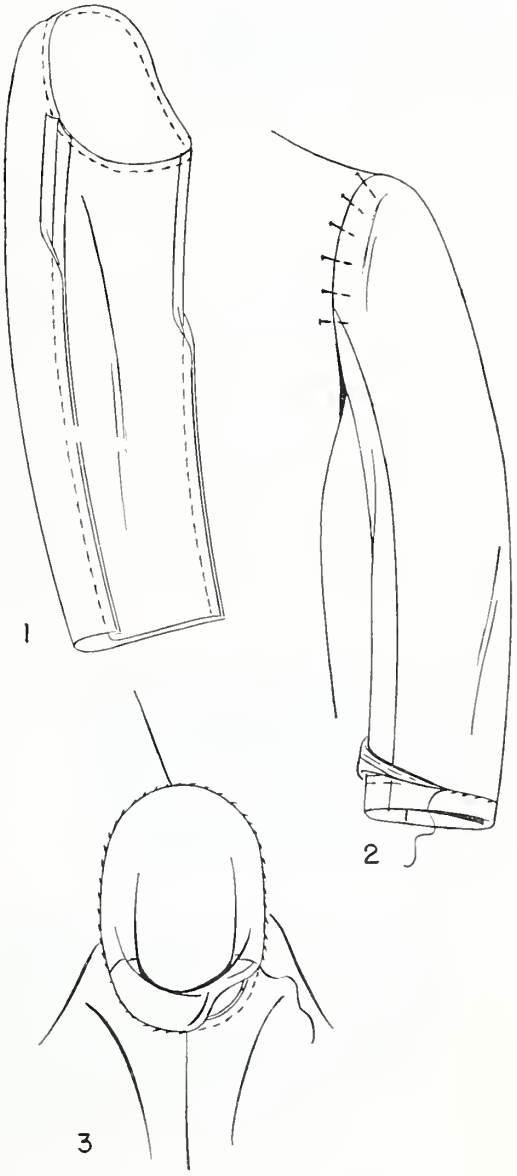
Before you cut, compare the size of the old lining pieces with the measurements of the coat sleeve. It may be that the rayon in the old lining has shrunk so that the new lining needs to be cut a bit larger. If so, make the allowance for shrinkage; then add about five-eighths inch for seams, and 1 inch or more as turn-up at the cuff.

1. Seam the lining. Press the seams open. Stitch by machine around the top of the sleeve, slightly less than the five-eighths inch allowed for a seam. This will hold the edge firm as you turn under and baste the five-eighths inch allowance. Press.

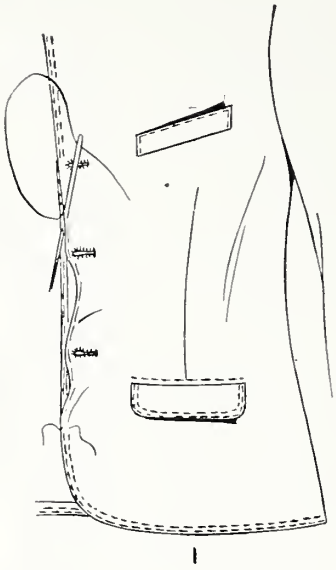
Turn the coat sleeve inside out. Pull the lining over it. Turn up and baste the amount allowed at the lower edge. Pin in place around the cuff.

2. Slip stitch to the coat. As you pull the lining up towards the armhole, tack lining and coat seams together at the back of the sleeve with loose basting stitches.

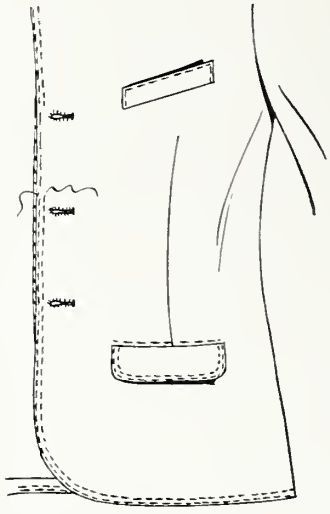
3. Fit and pin the lining smoothly around the armhole. Finish neatly with small stitches.



WORN COAT EDGE



1

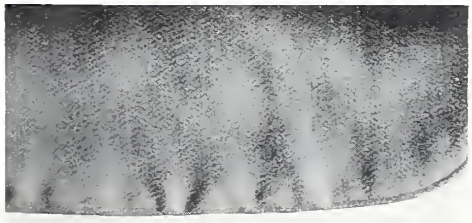


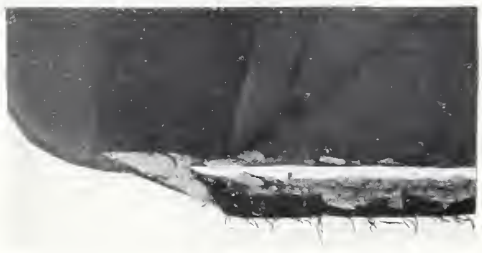
2

Pick out the machine stitching a little above and below the wear. With tailor's chalk strike a line for a new edge that will take off all the worn part but still keep a straight front edge.

1. On this new line turn in both the coat front and its facing. Baste each side as you turn it in. Pin. then slip stitch the coat front and facing together. Baste to hold edge firm for machine stitching. then press.

2. Stitch on the coat edge by machine exactly as it was originally. Let the new stitching join with the old so that it is not noticeable.





LUMPY COAT HEM

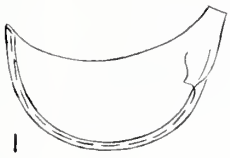
Sometimes lumps of lint collect in the corners and lower edges of the coat. Unless you remove this. the cloth will get shiny and wear thin on these lumps. and it will be impossible to give the coat a flat, sharp press where this lint gathers. Instead. the hem will look rippled and lumpy.

Open coat hem at the lower edge. Scrape out lint and soil collected there. Resew.

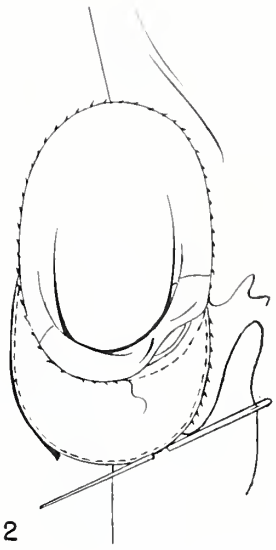
UNDERARM PATCHES FOR COAT LINING

If the lining at underarm is only slightly worn, put a shield patch over it. If it is so badly worn that you have to cut away some of the lining, seam in a patch. Sleeve linings also may be patched in these same ways.

Shield Patch



1

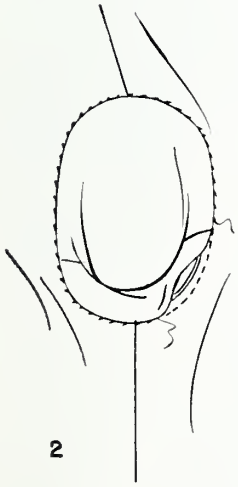


2

Rip the sleeve lining apart from the coat around the lower half of the armhole. Make a paper pattern shield-shaped to fit the underarm and to cover the worn place. Cut two shields—one for each side—from new lining material. Allow about one-fourth inch around the outer edges for turning under and about one-half inch on the armhole edge for a seam.

1. Turn under the outer edge of each shield, baste, and stitch by machine.

2. Tack each shield in place to the armhole seam. Smooth to fit the coat, and pin or baste. With matching thread slip stitch the shield to the coat lining. Sew the lining back in place and fasten off all threads.



2

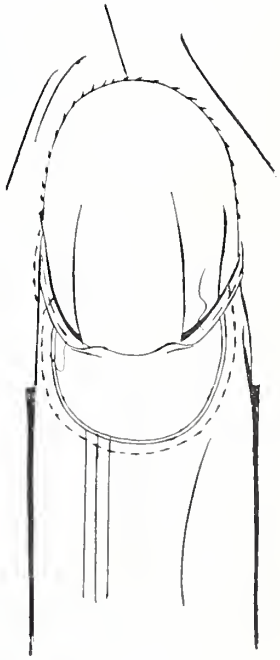
Seamed-in Patch

If the lining at the underarm is so worn that part of it needs to be cut away, seam in a patch. Rip the sleeve lining away from the lower part of the armhole. If it's the sleeve lining that needs a patch, it also may be ripped loose at the cuff and pulled inside out to make the patching easier.

With tailor's chalk mark on the lining the part to be cut away, then cut. Use this piece as a pattern for cutting the new patch. Allow twice the usual seam allowance on the edge to be sewed into the lining.

1. Baste and seam the new piece into the old lining. Press the seam.

2. Finish the armhole as it was at first.



1

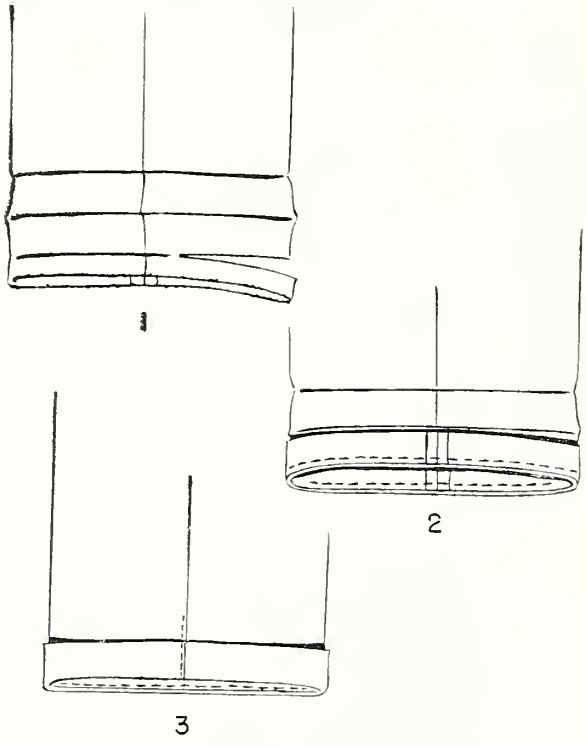
Trouser Repairs

WORN TROUSER CUFFS

Many suits still have cuffs that can be used to make trousers give longer wear. Cuffs may be repaired five or six times before trousers are noticeably shortened.

Cuffs are about 1¾ inches deep and the facing turned up inside the leg about 1 inch deep. Starting with a pair of trousers with plain cuffs you can make the following repairs one after another . . .

First Repair—Plain Cuff



Pick out the tacks at the side of the cuff. Rip open the lower edge.

1. With the cuff unfolded you will see three sharp press creases. Cut off the cuff exactly on the line of wear, which is the lowest crease. If the wear is only on the very edge, no extra cutting will be necessary. If the edge is worn up into the inside hem, trim it so you have a straight edge, or so you can make a straight seam.

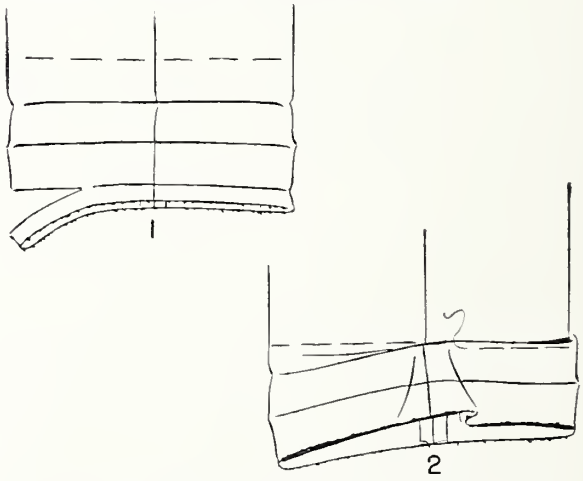
So little is taken off in the seams that the trousers are not noticeably shortened.

2. Seam the piece you have cut off back to the pants leg—with right sides of material together. Take a very tiny seam, no more than one-eighth inch wide. Do not press this seam open. Instead, press both sides of the seam toward the facing.

Fold the cuff back in place and baste so that the new seam line is held just inside the trouser leg. Press to sharpen the creases. Now turn down the cuff and stitch by machine on the facing side next to the new seam line. Machine-stitch again to hold the top edge in place. Hand stitching here wears out too quickly. Put a wool or tape guard in for longer wear (p. 4).

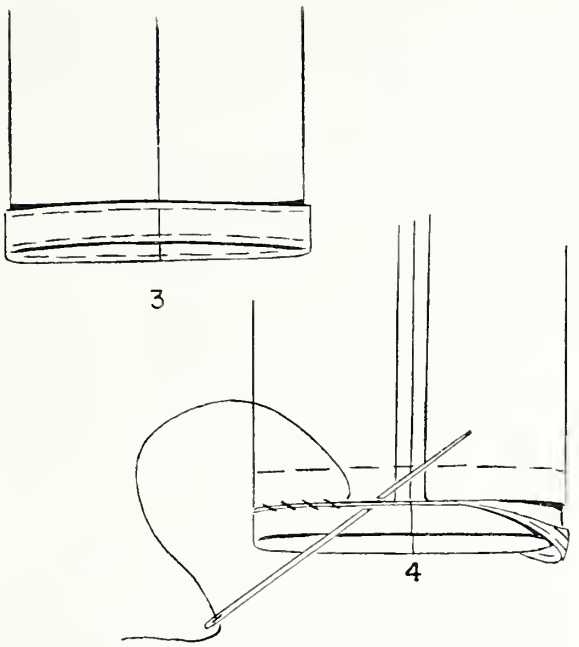
3. Turn the cuffs up and tack them at the sides. Do this by hand from the inside or on the right side by machine. To tack by machine, set the machine needle in the seam line one-half inch above the bottom of the trousers. Stitch up and beyond the cuff top one-half inch.

Second Repair—French Cuff



Rip out machine stitching put in with the first repair. Open the trouser cuffs as before.

1. There will be three sharp press lines. Cut off along the worn seam line at the bottom. With tailor's chalk strike a line 1¾ inches above the top crease. That marks where the top of the new cuff must come.



2. Fold, then baste, along the line of the top crease. Baste this fold to the chalk guide line just made.

3. Fold and baste along the second press line to form the lower edge of the trousers. Steam press to sharpen these folds and to show where to turn under for the inside finish.

4. Turn in the cut edge so that it just meets the newly made inside fold. If it should lap, a ridge will show through the middle of the cuff. Join the two folds with slip stitches, taken closely enough that they will not catch in wear.

Tack or machine-stitch the cuffs in place and give a final press. Then protect the lower edge with a wear guard—it's easier to sew it on by hand for this type of cuff.

Third Repair—French Cuff

Make this repair in the same way as the first by taking the line of wear out in a seam. Rip open the French cuff, cut along the line of wear, seam the piece back to the leg. Then turn and stitch by machine so the new seam is barely inside the trousers—not on the edge. Finish off in the same way as before the repair was made. It may be necessary to press out the old fold so as to get a perfectly smooth fit.

Fourth Repair—No Cuff

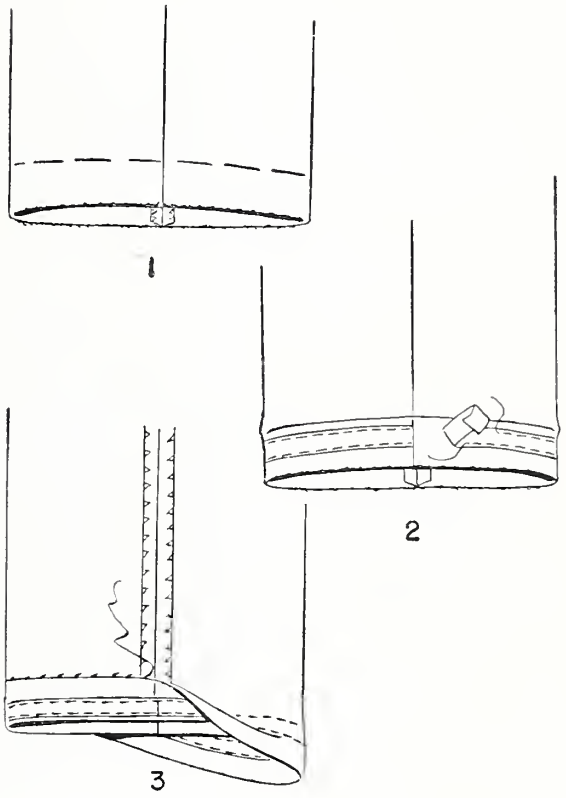
Rip out the French cuff and finish the leg without a cuff.

Turn down the top crease of the French cuff to form the lower edge of the trousers. Steam press to take out all other creases.

1. Mark and trim for a 1¾-inch hem.

2. Before the hem is stitched in place, sew on the wear guard as illustrated.

3. Then hem the trousers securely by hand. Be careful that no stitches show on the right side of the trouser leg.



Fifth Repair

Open the hem, take off the tape, and cut along the worn edge. Seam out the worn part as in the first repair. Stitch the wear guard on again by machine, then hem by hand.

Sixth Repair

Repeat fifth repair if the trousers are long enough to permit it.

FRAYED POCKET EDGES

Slightly Frayed

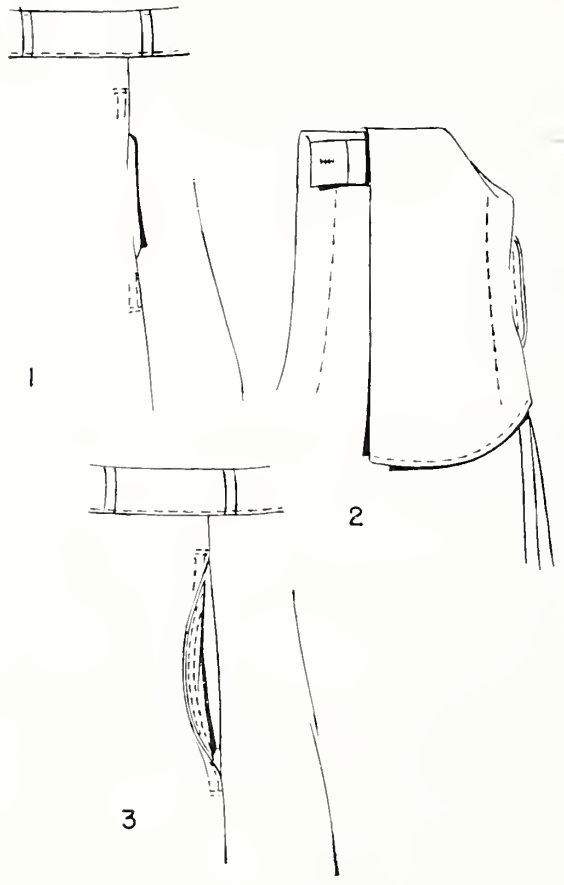
1. If the edges of side pockets are worn but not along the full length of the opening. rip the inside facing apart from the pocket edge a little beyond the worn part.

If the wear is slight. you need only turn in the worn edges. slip stitch them together and finish the same as before.

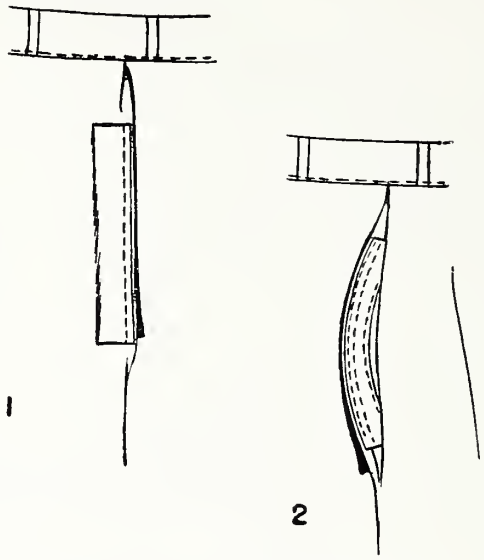
2. If the edges are more worn. trim off the worn parts of both the facing and the pocket edge, but be very careful to keep a straight line. Reseam the facing to the pocket edge by machine. taking a very tiny seam.

3. Roll the seam line so it is barely inside the pocket opening. then baste and press.

Stitch the pocket edge by machine once or twice. depending upon how it was finished in the first place.



Entire Edge Frayed



If the pocket is worn along entire edge—

Cut the bars at each end and rip the seams open a little. just above and below the pocket. Rip the facing apart from the pocket mouth. Trim off the worn part. being careful to keep a straight line. then reseam. If the facing is worn deeply, rip the other side of it away from the cotton pocketing and turn that side out to the pocket edge.

1. Reseam the facing to the pocket mouth with right sides of the two pieces together.

2. Turn facing back into the pocket with the seam line just inside. Baste. press. and stitch as it was before you ripped it. Resew the seams above and below the pocket. Then bar pocket ends by stitching back and forth to strengthen them.

TO REPLACE INSIDE POCKET

First turn trousers inside out and rip out stitching that holds pocket to waist band.

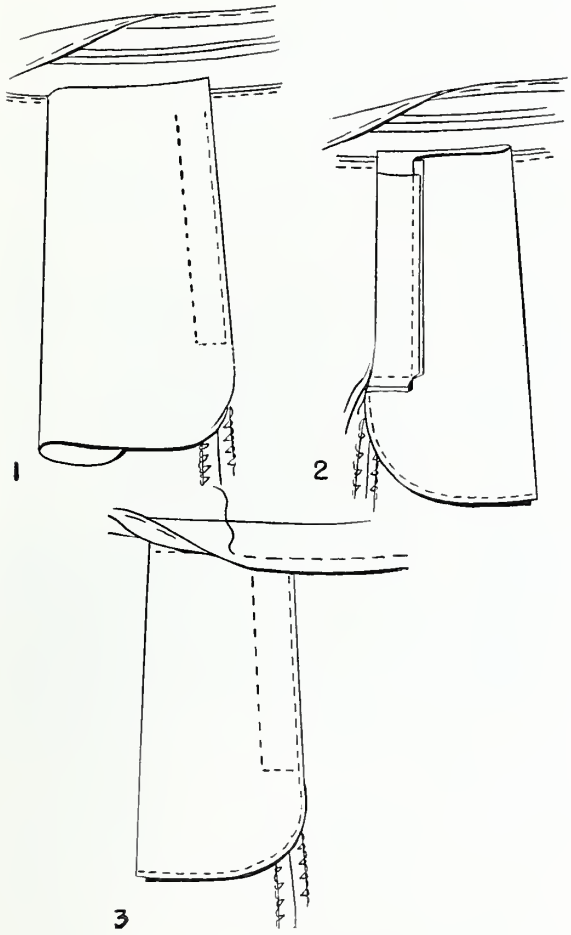
Cut a paper pattern for the pocket. Mark the side that is to be laid on the fold when you cut the new pocket. Allow about three-eighths inch for seams when you cut.

Cut off the old pocket next to the two wool facings just inside the pocket mouth. This leaves in some of the old pocketing that is stitched back of the wool facing. If this part of the old pocket were ripped out. it would be more difficult to put in the new one.

1. Turn under the seam allowance along one side of new pocket. Baste and stitch it back of the wool facing, over the old pocketing, as illustrated. French-seam lower edge of pocket and retrace the stitching at corners.

2. Smooth and pin in place the other side of the pocket—the side that lies next to the trousers. Pin this along the edge of the other wool facing. It will be necessary to trim off or turn under a little more of the pocketing on this side. Baste, and stitch twice by machine.

3. Slip the top of the pocket underneath the waist band, then stitch by machine from the right side. Use dark thread on the spool and white in the bobbin.



INSIDE POCKET REPAIRS

If the inside pocket has only a small hole in the corner, restitch the lower edge of the pocket above the hole. Do not cut off the pocket below the stitching.

Half Pocket Repair

If only the lower part of the pocket is worn out, make a half pocket repair.

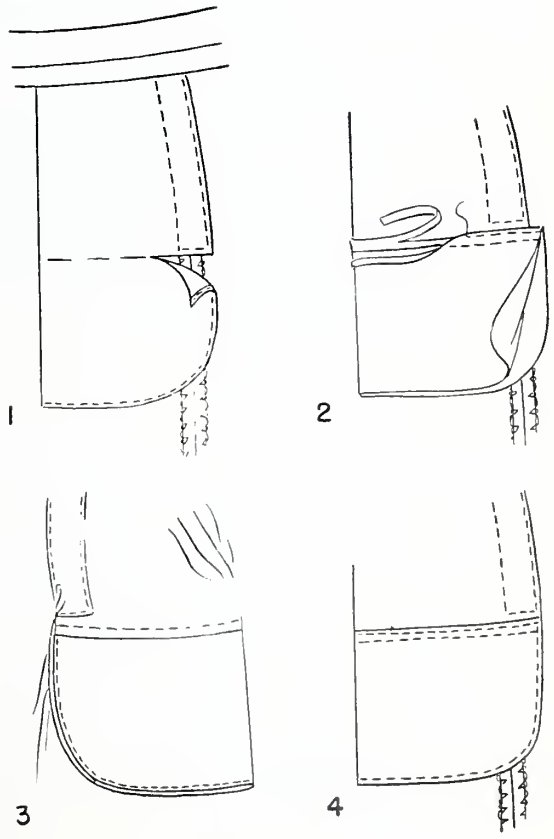
1. Cut off the worn part of the pocket. Lay the folded edge of this old pocket bottom on a lengthwise fold of new pocketing. Cut a new half pocket, adding three-eighths inch for seams at the side and twice this amount for the top edge, which will be seamed to the old pocket.

2. Sew the new half pocket to the old with the seam outside. Press this seam up, trim away the under half, and finish as a flat fell. This keeps the inside of the pocket smooth and comfortable to use.

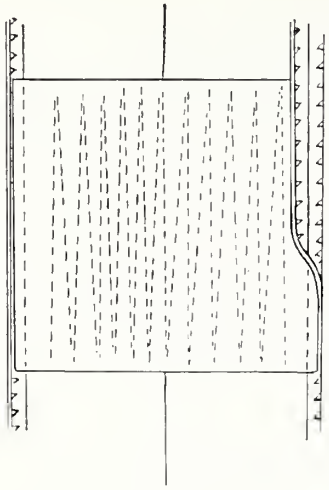
3. Turn the pocket inside out. Take a one-eighth inch seam around the side and bottom.

4. Turn the pocket back into the trousers and finish as a French seam by stitching one-fourth inch from the edge. Fasten off the threads at the end of the stitching.

Remember to keep the pockets on both sides of the trousers exactly the same length.



WORN TROUSER KNEES



When knees wear through, they may be patched in the same way as worn elbows (p. 8). If you have enough material, you can make this patch less noticeable by extending the patch block to the nearest side seam.

If knees are worn so that only lengthwise yarns are left, darn by hand to matching or harmonizing cloth tacked to the inside. Use thread that matches material or is slightly darker.

Shown above is a quick strong mend that is practical for boys' everyday pants and men's work suits. Lay the worn spot over a patch. Baste the patch in place. From the right side stitch back and forth closely by machine with thread that matches perfectly. This mend will show more than a hand darn does unless the cloth has a mottled or tweedy pattern.

Seamed Knee Mend

If the trousers still have plain cuffs, a strip of wear may be cut out of the knee, the lower part of the trouser leg moved up and seamed at the knee, and the leg finished without a cuff.

1. Open the cuff and rip the two leg seams from the bottom to a little above the worn place at the knee. With ruler and chalk mark a line straight with the crosswise yarns close to the top of the worn spot. Mark another line just below the wear. Check the distance between these two lines to make sure it is the same all the way across. Cut out this worn section of the knee on the two chalk lines.

2. Then seam the raw edges of the two remaining parts of the trouser front together. Press the seam open.

This will change the side edges of the leg front a bit, so lay a ruler along each side, strike a straight line, trim on this line, and reseam the trouser leg at the sides.

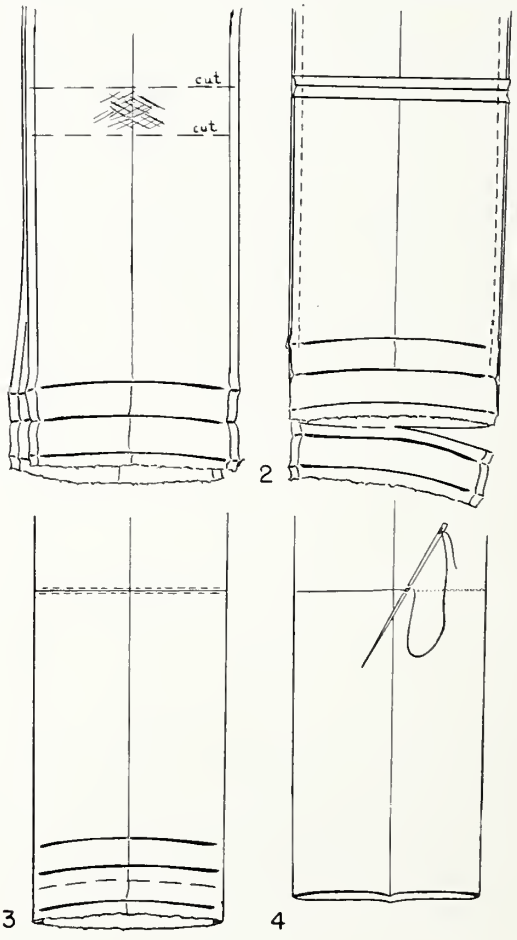
To mark the lower edge of the trousers for finishing, measure down from the top crease the exact width of the piece cut out of the leg plus two seam allowances. This new line at the front should correspond with the top crease at the back of the leg.

Allow about 1¾ inches more for a hem, then cut off any material that is left. Finish as a hemmed trouser leg (p. 13).

3. For everyday trousers, make patch more durable by stitching by machine on each side of the seam line rather than finishing by hand.

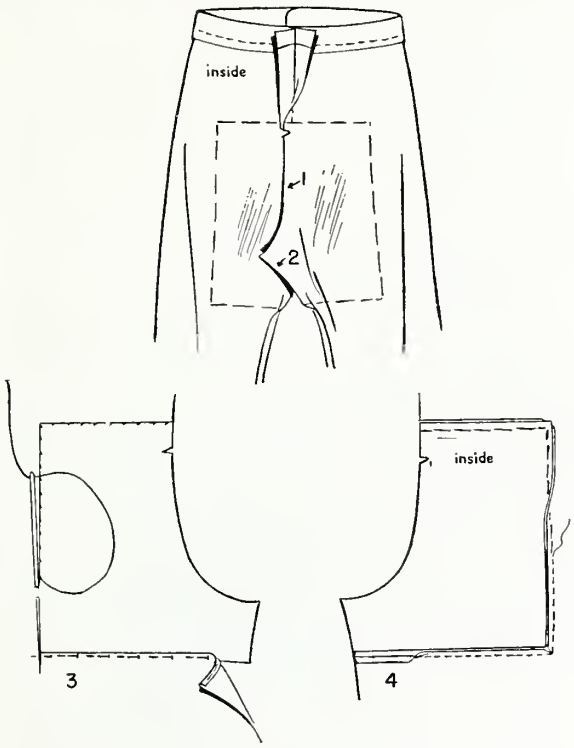
4. Make the seam across the knee less noticeable with the rantering stitch (p. 6).

Cross-stitch to hold seam edges flat inside.



TO RESEAT TROUSERS

When trousers are so badly worn in the seat that you can no longer repair them with patches and darns, reseat them. Cut material for reseating from a vest, from the more worn of two pairs of matching trousers, or from a discarded coat.



Sometimes you can find swatches of matching material in shops.

Make notches or marks that will serve as a guide in reseaming.

1. Rip open the back rise beginning about 6 inches from the top of the trousers.

2. Rip the inseams down 3 or 4 inches.

Mark with chalk the worn part to be cut out. If the suiting is striped or checked it will be easier to hide the seam and match the piece if you cut the worn place out with the crosswise and lengthwise yarns of the goods. If trousers are of plain material, make the outer edge of the new seat curved.

Use the piece you have cut out as a pattern for matching and cutting the new seat. Allow double seam allowance around this piece to make up for the seam that must be taken from the trousers to sew in the new seat.

3. Turn under and press lightly a seam allowance around hole cut in trousers. Clip corners the depth of the seam allowance. Lay the new seat under this hole and match carefully from the right side. Baste the trousers to the patch with loose hemming stitches. Let these stitches catch only in the edge of the folded trouser edge. They serve as a guide for the inside stitching and will be pulled out later.

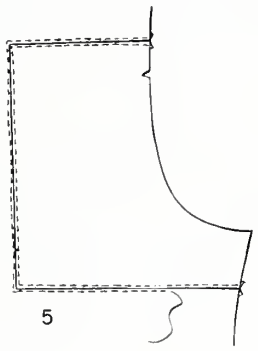
4. Turn the trousers inside out and stitch by machine exactly on this line of hand stitching. Press the seam open.

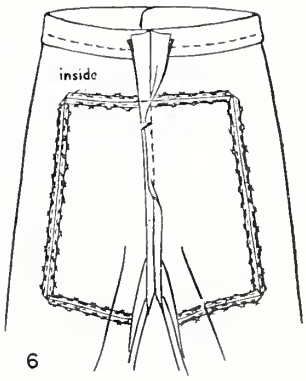
5. If the trousers won't be worn for "Sunday best," strengthen this seam by turning to the right side and stitching by machine close to each side of the seam. This will also hold the seam flat on the wrong side.

To finish the seam so that it is less noticeable—instead of strengthening by machine stitching on the right side, hide the seam line with the rantering stitch used to finish the collar roll (p. 6).

6. Then, to hold the seam flat on the inside of the trousers, catch stitch as illustrated.

Restitch the inseams and back rise of the trousers and press.

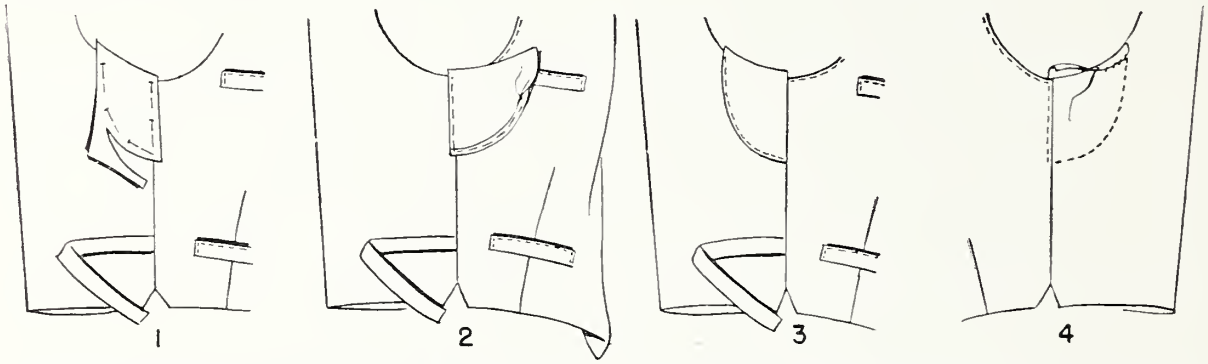




Vest Repairs

Vests often need repairs at the underarm. Mend a small hole or worn spot here with a shield patch. Use a panel patch for larger worn places.

SHIELD PATCH



1. Cut a paper pattern that will cover the worn part of the vest. From this cut a patch of rayon lining material. Allow about one-fourth inch for turning under all around.

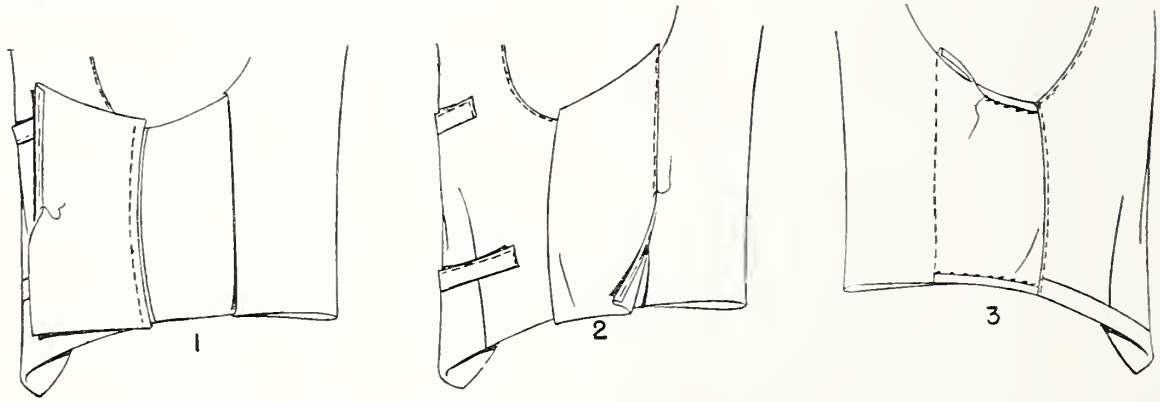
2. Turn under, baste, and press the curved edge of the shield. Lay the right side of the rayon patch back against the right side of the wool front of the vest. Stitch in line with the underarm seam of the vest.

3. Turn the patch back in place over the worn spot, then stitch by machine to the vest.

4. Turn the top edge of the shield over to the inside of the vest and hem by hand.

Even though both sides of the vest may not need to be patched, it looks better to have a patch on each side if a man goes coatless.

PANEL PATCH



Cut a strip of rayon the length of the vest at the underarm, plus a seam allowance for turning under at both top and lower edge of the vest. Cut it wide enough to cover the worn spot and allow for about one-fourth inch turn under at each side.

1. Lay the right side of the patch back against wool front of vest. Stitch along underarm seam.

2. Press the patch toward the back of the vest. Turn under, baste, and press the other side of the patch and stitch it to the vest, covering all the wear.

3. Turn under and shape the patch over the top and lower edges of the vest. Hem by hand to the lining of the vest.

Small Repairs

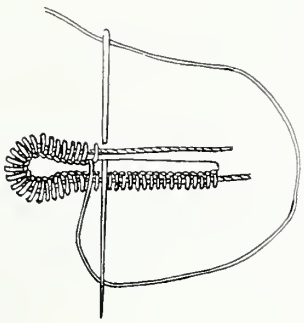
There are a number of minor repairs that may be needed on trousers, coat, or vest. No matter where they are, the method for making the repairs is the same.

WORN BUTTONHOLES

Use twist made especially for working buttonholes on men's suits. If you can't get this buttonhole twist, use double ordinary thread. Wax it for strength and easy handling (see Beeswax, p. 3).

Pick out all worn and ragged stitches of the buttonhole. Be careful not to pull the hole out of shape as you rip out the old stitching. Join new stitching with old carefully so that it won't show where the repair is made.

1. If the entire buttonhole has to be reworked, work over gimp or several strands of thread twisted together and waxed.



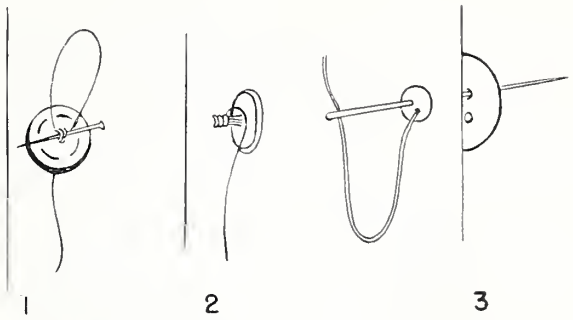
PULLED-OUT BUTTONS

If a button has pulled off and taken a bit of cloth with it—darn it or patch it—depending upon the size of the torn place.

If the hole is smaller than the button, darn with matching yarns over a small piece of reinforcing material slipped under the hole. Then sew the button on again.

If the suiting is torn beyond the button so that a darn wouldn't be strong enough to hold the button, set in a carefully matched block patch as you would for repairing a worn elbow (p. 8).

To prevent strain that may cause the button to pull a hole in the suiting again, sew the button on with a shank.



1. Make the shank by laying a pin or two across the top of the button. Sew several times over the pins and through the button and material.

2. Pull out the pins, lift the button, wind the thread beneath the button, and fasten off. Length of shank needed depends on thickness of the suiting.

3. For even greater protection, sew a tiny stay button directly under the top button but on the inside of the suit. Sew through both buttons at the same time and make a shank inside the top button long enough to allow the buttonhole to fit underneath without strain on the cloth.

TO RESTORE PIN STRIPES

Pin stripes worn off at the knees, elbows, or seat of a suit can be restored by machine. Since the material is likely to be worn a bit in these places it is a good idea to reinforce them at the same time.

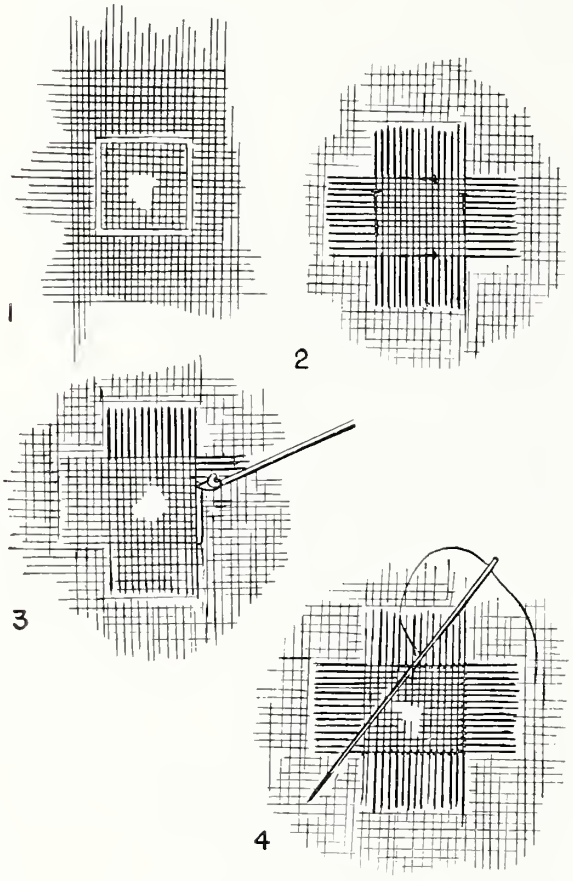
Cut rayon lining pieces the proper size and baste them underneath the places to be restriped. Thread the bobbin of the machine with white thread and use a spool of thread that matches the suiting for the top stitching. Tighten the top tension of the machine so that the white thread underneath is drawn to the surface and gives the same effect as the stripe. Experiment until you get the right tension adjustment, then stitch along the old stripe lines. Tie and clip off the thread ends on the inside of the suit.

When other kinds of stripes wear off, it is probable that they too can be restored.

REWEAVE PATCH

When a hole or a close group of holes would make a darn difficult or when a darn would show too much, apply a patch over the hole. This patch, put on from the right side of the material, is suitable only for material that is rather coarsely woven.

On the material to be patched, mark with four pins a square or rectangle the size of the patch you need.



1. Clip out only one yarn on each side of the square or rectangle. Pull one yarn out in each direction, leaving the outline of the patch you want to make.

2. Cut a matched patch piece about 1 inch larger all around than this space. Be sure the lengthwise yarns of the patch match with the lengthwise yarns of the suiting. Ravel out yarns from each side until the patch piece is an exact fit. Lay the matched patch on top of the hole on the right side of the material. Pin it in place.

3. From the wrong side of the material, pull the raveled yarns through to the wrong side with a small crochet hook. Draw the raveled yarns through the spaces left by the pulled out yarns. Do this all around until the patch sets smoothly over the damaged spot.

4. With needle and thread take little hemming stitches on the wrong side of the patch along the line where the yarns have been pulled through. This holds the patch in place. Steam-press the patch.

THREE-CORNER TEAR

If the tear is not frayed badly, the best way to mend it is to seam by barely catching a yarn or two inside the frayed edge. Steam-press the seams open, clip off any thick corners. From the right side, hide the seam line with the rantering stitch used to finish off the worn collar roll (p. 6).

If the tear is badly frayed, or if the suiting is so heavy that a seam would be thick, machine-darn the tear to a matching piece of suiting or a piece of lining.

Baste a piece of matching cloth or lining under the tear. Arrange any loose yarns so that you will stitch over them. Thread the machine with carefully matched thread. Stitch back and forth over the tear and deep enough into the material so that it will be sure to hold. To stitch backwards, barely lift the presser foot, then move the material forward slowly enough to get stitches of the right size. Lower the foot again to stitch forward. This is quicker than turning your work or using the lever that new machines have for stitching in reverse.

SMALL HOLES

Repair tiny holes by reweaving with yarn pulled from the inseams. To repair larger holes, set in a carefully matched piece of cloth under the hole and darn so as to hold the cut edges flat. See page 8 for darning the elbow.

Trouser Adjustments

When a man gains or loses weight or when a boy grows, trousers may need to be adjusted for good fit, comfort, and better wear.

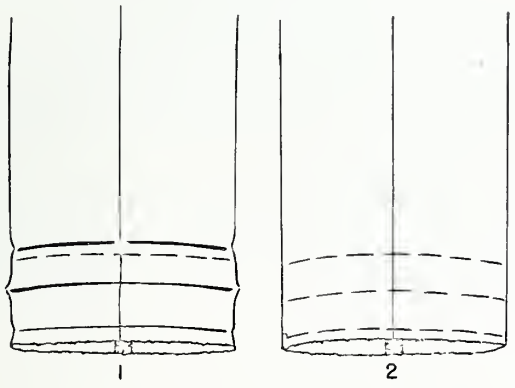
TO LENGTHEN TROUSERS

Pick out the tacks at the sides of the cuff and rip open the lower edge. Spread the cuffs out full length. If the cuffs have never been repaired or adjusted, there will be three sharp press lines. The top crease marks the length the trousers have been, so measure from this line when you mark for a new length.

1. Measure down from the top crease the amount you want to lengthen the trousers. Mark around the leg with tailor's chalk. Steam out all old press lines.

Make a plain cuff or a French cuff, depending upon how much you are lengthening the leg. If 1 inch or less is being added to trouser length, finish again with a plain cuff. If trousers are lengthened more than 1 inch, finish with a French cuff.

Plain Cuff Finish



2. From the chalk mark, measure down 1¾ inches and mark a line around the trouser leg. Mark another line 1¾ inches below that.

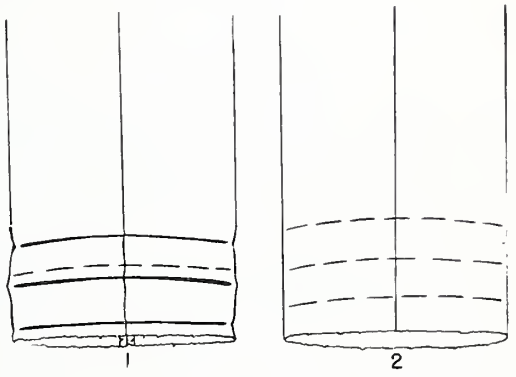
Pick up, fold, and baste along the middle chalk line. Pin the first and third lines together and baste. Steam-press.

Fold to form the new cuff along the line where the third and first chalk lines are basted together. Baste to hold the cuff in place and press.

To finish the cut edge, which is turned up inside the trouser leg, turn the cuff down again, baste, and stitch it by machine. Finish with a wear guard (see p. 4), then tack the cuffs at the side.

For illustrations that show details of plain cuffs, see page 12.

French Cuff Finish



If you need to lengthen the trousers more than an inch, finish with a French cuff.

1. From the chalk line that is the guide for the new length, 2. strike two more lines—one 1¾ inches above the first line, one 1¾ inches below.

Fold on the center line and baste. Lay this fold against the top line and baste. Fold and baste along the lower line, which marks the bottom edge of the cuff. Steam-press.

Turn the cut edge up inside the pants and turn in so that it just meets the top fold. Trim off any extra material. Join the two folds with hand stitches about one-fourth inch apart so they won't catch on shoes. Put in a wear guard (see p. 4). Steam-press and tack cuffs at the side.

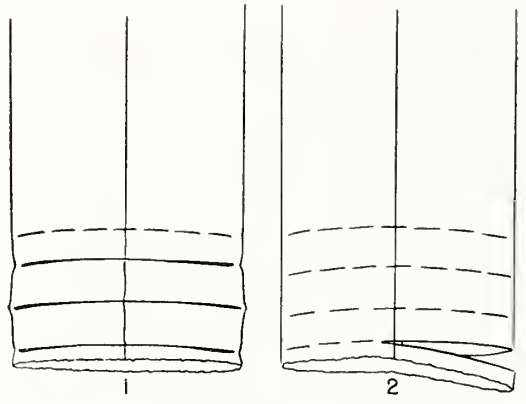
For illustrations of details of French cuff, see page 12.

TO SHORTEN TROUSERS

Pick out the tacks at the sides of the cuff and rip open the lower edge. Spread the cuffs out full length.

1. From the top press crease, which marks the old length, measure up the amount the leg is to be shortened. Mark around the leg at the new length with tailor's chalk. Steam-press to take out creases.

2. From the line just drawn, measure down and mark two more lines 1¾ inches apart. Strike a fourth line about 1½ inches below the bottom line and cut away all goods below this line.

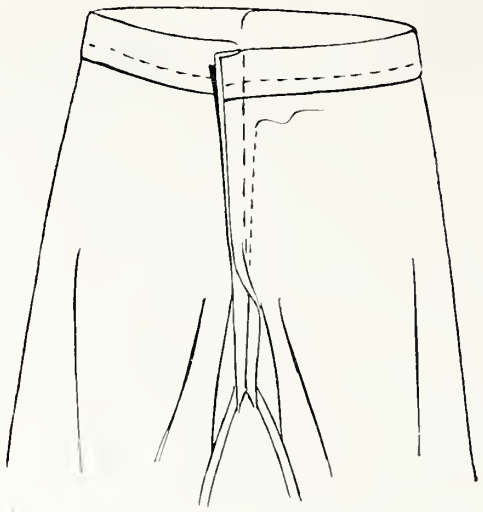


Finish as a plain cuff. Pick up, fold, and baste along the middle chalk line. Pin the first and third lines together and baste. Steam-press.

Fold to form the new cuff along the line where the third and first chalk lines were basted together. Baste to hold the cuff in place and press.

To finish the cut edge, which is turned up inside the trouser leg, turn the cuff down again, baste, and stitch it by machine. Finish with a wear guard (p. 4), then tack the cuffs at the side.

Illustrations on page 12 show details of finishing the plain cuff.



LET OUT OR TAKE IN SEAT

At the back rise of most trousers there is a generous seam allowance. Reseam along the back rise to make the seat smaller or larger as the need may be. Do this before you rip out the old stitching, then rip the old seam, and steam-press the new seam.

However, if there is some doubt about the fit, baste the new seam line, rip out the old stitching, and fit the trousers before stitching by machine.

LET OUT TOO-SHORT CROTCH

Rip the inseams down from the crotch point about 12 inches. Open the back and front rise slightly—just so the seam allowances of the inseams are free. You will find plenty of seam there for this purpose if the trousers have not been adjusted before.

Let out the seam as needed and resew, tapering off to meet the old stitching lines of the inseams. Press open, then reseam the front and back rise, and press again.

Care Saves Mending

Here are a number of preventive measures that make a suit "live" longer and help cut down on repair jobs.

BRUSH AND AIR. Brush suits often—in the direction of the grain of the cloth. Brush inside the suit as well as out, in and around pockets . . . inside cuffs if there are any.

If a closet isn't well-ventilated, it's a good idea to let a suit hang in the open to air before it goes into the closet. From time to time, give suits an outdoor airing.

HANG IT STRAIGHT. Put suit on a hangar as soon as you remove it. Don't spoil the press by laying it carelessly over a chair.

Put coat on a wooden hanger—one with broad shoulders made especially for men's shoulders. See that shoulders set squarely on the hanger.

Hang trousers on a special trouser hanger or over the cross bar of a wooden hanger. If you must use a wire hanger, place a heavy piece of cardboard or a thick piece of paper over the cross-bar first to help prevent crosswise creases on the trousers. Pull trousers through the hanger as far as the width of the hanger will allow so that the thicker part of the trousers lies over the hanger bar. Creases here show less than in the middle of the trouser leg.

When there is no hanger at hand, use the loop at the back of the neck to hang a coat. Or hang it over the back of a chair. But save the shape of the shoulders and collar . . . pinch up the coat back so that the shoulders rest on the corners of the chair.

REGULAR CLEANING AND PRESSING. Dirt grinds into wool and makes it wear out more quickly. Take your soiled suits to a cleaner who does a thorough cleaning job. More drastic—and therefore more wearing—cleaning methods are needed for badly soiled suits.

If you press suits at home between cleanings, look for spots before you press. A warm iron "sets" spots so they will never come out. Always steam press wool—never set the iron directly on the wool itself (see Pressing Supplies, p. 3), and be careful about scorch. Wool can scorch even when you have a cloth over it if your iron is too hot.

PROTECT AGAINST MOTHS. Clothes moths can undo all your saving of wool. Never leave woolen clothing lying around on closet shelves. If you have a woolen garment hanging in the back of the closet, air and brush it once in a while.

Before storing wools away for a season have them dry-cleaned, or brush and air them thoroughly in the sun.

Store wool suits and overcoats—or have them stored—in paper bags, wrapped in paper, sealed in boxes, or in trunks, chests, or tight closets. Seal paper bags and packages. Trunks and chests must have tight-fitting lids. A closet set aside for storage of wools should have all cracks in plaster and around baseboards filled up and a gasket on the door so that it shuts tightly.

Play safe by using flakes, crystals, or balls of naphthalene in wool you store at home. As these preparations evaporate they give off a gas that first discourages the moth larvae from feeding on wool and then, if concentrated enough, kills them.

About 1 pound of flake naphthalene is enough for a small chest, trunk, or box. Sprinkle through folds of clothing around cuffs and creases, tie in sacks on hanger necks, slip into pockets, or hang high in closets.

TIPS TO THE MAN WHO WEARS THE SUIT. Remember that keys carried everyday in the hip pocket rub against chairs and wear holes through both pockets and outer cloth. Overloading stretches and strains pockets—sometimes tears the corners.

Pens and pencils need clips and well-fitting tops if they are not to stain or jab holes.

Thin pads on office chairs save the seat of trousers from getting shiny so quickly.

A belt that fits easily through belt loops won't rub the loops fuzzy as will a wider belt.

Trousers one-half inch above the heels don't get so much rub and therefore wear longer about the lower edge than longer trousers.

If you get a suit soaked in rain or snow, let it dry slowly in a well-ventilated room, away from heat. Brush the suit well after it dries.

Contents

	Page
Mending materials	3
Guard against wear	4
Shields	4
Wear guards	4
Knee retreads	4
Seat retreads	5
Coat repairs	6
Worn collar roll	6
Frayed sleeve edge	7
Worn elbows	8
To reline sleeves	9
Worn coat edge	10
Lumpy coat hem	10
Underarm patches for coat lining	11
Trouser repairs	12
Worn trouser cuffs	12
Frayed pocket edges	14
To replace inside pocket	14
Inside pocket repairs	15
Worn trouser knees	16
To reseat trousers	17
Vest repairs	18
Shield patch	18
Panel patch	18
Small repairs	19
Worn buttonholes	19
Pulled-out buttons	19
To restore pin stripes	19
Reweave patch	20
Three-corner tear	20
Small holes	20
Trouser adjustments	21
To lengthen trousers	21
To shorten trousers	22
Let out or take in seat	22
Let out too-short crotch	22
Care saves mending	23

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE: 1946

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C.
Price 10 cents